

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Applicant:

KELLY FETZER

Serial No.: Unknown

Filed: March 20, 2001

For: CONTAINMENT SYSTEM

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Group Art Unit: 1764

Examiner: B. Yildirim

Atty. Docket No.: 016741/00080

Dear Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Applicant submits this Preliminary Amendment in support of its Request for Interference.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the application as follows:

Page 1, before "Field of invention", please insert the following:

-- This is a continuation application of U.S. patent application serial no. 09/397,174 filed on September 16, 1999, which is a divisional application of U.S. patent application serial no. 08/932,419, filed on September 17, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 6,022,454. --

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-20 from the parent application and add the following claims:

21. (New). An apparatus for confining the discharge of coke, liquids and/or gases from a bottom outlet of a coke drum, the coke drum being supported above a working surface, comprising:

a shield of dimensions in a horizontal plane greater than that of a horizontal plane of the coke drum bottom outlet and of vertical height at least about as great as the height of the bottom outlet above the working surface;

a system to move said shield into position to cover an area from the drum bottom outlet to the working surface.

22. (New). An apparatus according to claim 21, including a coke drum unheading system and a connector on coke drum inlet piping bolts contained within said shield and both being remotely operable.

23. (New). An apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said system to move and shield includes actuators in the form of hydraulic cylinders each having a piston rod extending therefrom, the cylinders and piston rods being interconnected between an elevated support and said shield.

24. (New). An apparatus according to claim 21, including:

an inner shield supported adjacent the coke drum bottom outlet and telescopically positioned interiorly of said first mentioned shield.

25. (New). An apparatus according to claim 21, including a safe mechanism that precounts said shield from accidentally moving to thereby enhance safety operations.

26. (New). A safety improved coke drum supported above a working surface comprising:

an upright coke drum having a sidewall and a lower portion that tapers downwardly and inwardly from a lower end portion of the sidewall to a bottom end that has a large diameter bottom outlet therein, the bottom outlet being spaced above the working surface;

a removable flange member closing said bottom outlet;

a shield of dimensions in a horizontal plane greater than that of a horizontal plane of the coke drum bottom outlet and of vertical height at least about as great as the height of the bottom outlet above the working surface; and

a plurality of actuators connected to said shield; and

a system to move said shield with respect to said drum bottom outlet to selectably position said shield to encompass an area between said bottom outlet and the working surface.

27. (New). A safety improved coke drum according to claim 26, including a flange member for closing said bottom outlet, the flange member being supported by supporting structure and wherein said shield is configured to encompass said supporting structure.

28. (New). A safety improved coke drum according to claim 26, wherein said system to move said shield includes actuators in the form of hydraulic cylinders each having a piston rod extending therefrom, the cylinders and piston rods being interconnected between a support and said shield being moved vertically to position said shield.

29. (New). A safety improved coke drum according to claim 26, including:

an inner shield supported adjacent the coke drum bottom outlet and telescopically positioned interiorly of said first mentioned shield.

30. (New). For use with an upright coke drum having a sidewall and a lower portion that tapers downwardly and inwardly from the sidewall to a bottom and that has a large diameter bottom outlet therein, the bottom outlet being spaced above a working surface, a safety system comprising:

a removable flange member closing the coke drum bottom outlet;

a remotely controllable unheading apparatus for unheading said flange member from the bottom outlet; and

a shield of dimensions in a horizontal plane greater than that of a horizontal plane of the coke drum bottom outlet and said unheading apparatus and of vertical height at least about as great as the height of the bottom outlet above the working surface, the shield at least substantially surrounding an area between the bottom outlet and the working surface configured to confine discharges from the coke drum when said flange member is unheaded from the bottom outlet.

31. (New). A safety system according to claim 30, wherein said shield is moveable between a undeployed and an deployed position.

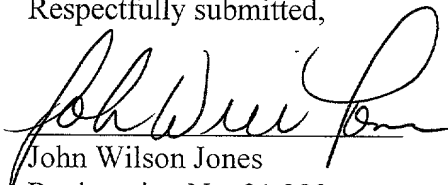
32. (New). A safety system according to claim 31, wherein said shield is vertically elevated with respect to the working surface between said undeployed and deployed positions.

REMARKS

Claims In the Application. Claims 1-20 originally filed with the parent application have been cancelled. Claims 21-32 have been added to this application and the only active claims in this application. No new matter has been introduced by these claims. The "floor plates" and /or an "exit chute" as disclosed in the application are each equivalent to a "shield" as employed in U.S. Patent No. 6,039,844. Floor plate 126 in FIGS. 29-31 of Applicant are illustrative of a shield "of vertical height at least about as great as the height of the bottom outlet above the working surface" as recited in the independent claims. In addition, this vertical limitation is met by exit chute 59, as illustrated in FIGS. 16, 16a, 17, 18, 21, 21a, 21c and 22. Applicant's specification further references, as actuators, hydraulic cylinders. The hydraulic cylinders 65 illustrated in FIG. 18 have "a piston rod extending therefrom" 66. *See further the actuator in FIGS. 16, 17 and 18.*

Request for Interference. The Examiner is respectfully requested to refer to Request for Interference With U.S. Patent No. 6,039,844 Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.607 which accompanies this Preliminary Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,


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